WTO Cell in States

510. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Karnataka Government has set up a WTO Cell to find a solution to farmers' problems following the unprecedented fall in the prices of agricultural commodities due to the announcements made by Government for the second phase of liberalization policy;

(b) if so, whether Government have asked the other State Governments to set up such cell in their respective States;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the remedial steps taken by Government to safeguard the interest of the farmers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) The Government of Karnataka have set up a cell on WTO related issues with the objective of analysing the provisions of the WTO Agreement and its implication on the horticulture and agriculture sector in Karnataka and accordingly to suggest measures for taking advantage of the WTO regime for the benefit of agriculture and horticulture in Karnataka.

(b) and (c) The Government of India have also advised all State Governments/Union Territories to set up WTO cells and appoint nodal officers for coordinating with the Government of India on WTO related issues.

(d) To safeguard the interest of farmers in the country, the Government have put in place a suitable mechanism for monitoring of imports of sensitive items and are committed to providing adequate protection to domestic producers by resorting to various WTO compatible measures which include appropriate calibration of applied tariffs within bound tariffs, imposition of antidumping, countervailing duties and safeguard action under certain specified circumstances.

Decline in Exports

511. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of sectors in which India's share in exports declined in terms of dollars and rupee terms during the year 2001-2002 in comparison to the last three years year-wise and country-wise;

(b) whether the handloom sector is one of them; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to boost the export and achieve the target fixed for the Ninth Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) The major sectors registering decline in the percentage share during the year 2001-2002 in comparison to the last three years are following:-

Sectors	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	Apr-Sept. 2001-02
	Share in Percentage			
Agri and allied prod.	12.03	9.98	8.72	8.47
Marine Products	3.13	3.22	3.14	3.04
Ores & Mineral	2.69	2.50	2.61	2.57
Gems and Jewellery	17.85	20.43	16.67	15.99
Textiles incl. Handicrafts and Carpets	28.6	28.55	27.1	25.45

(c) The Synchronized global recession and the Sept. 11 event and its aftermath, has led to lower export growth worldwide. Some of the recent measures taken to promote exports include reduction in the export credit rate for both pre-shipment and post-shipment, special financial package to manufacturer exporters with an export contract of Rs. 100 crore or above for a period of one year, extension of normal repatriation period from 180 days to 360 days for exports for a period of one year and upward revision of duty draw back rates on a number of product groups. All this and other factors have helped to arrest the declining trend in exports experienced during the early part of the current financial year. Further, taking Stock of the developments in the recent past and considering the current global economic environment, the Medium Term Export Strategy for the period 2002—2007 has been announced.

Bilateral trade negotiations with Bangladesh

512. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of bilateral trade negotiations with Bangladesh that have failed in the past to yield any agreement indicating specific concessions claimed